

**Request for Reconsideration:**

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that the Examiner indicates that claim 35 is allowed, and that claim 20 describes allowable subject matter and would be allowable if amended to include the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants are amending claims 13 and 20 merely to clarify the claimed embodiment. Claim 20 has been rewritten in independent form, and is allowable, along with corresponding dependent claim 21. No new matter is added by the foregoing amendments, and these amendments are fully supported by the specification. See, e.g., Appl'n, Paras. [0037] and [0038], and **Figs. 3-5**. Thus, claims 13-22 and 35 are pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner enter the foregoing amendments and reconsider the above-captioned patent application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

**Remarks:**

1. Rejections.

Claims 13-15, 21,<sup>2</sup> and 22 now stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by Patent Application Publication No. US 2005/0192604 to Carson et al. (“Carson”). Additionally, claims 16 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly rendered obvious over Carson in view of Patent Application Publication No. US 2001/0001122 to Gifford, III et al. (“Gifford”). Claims 18 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly rendered obvious over Carson in view of PCT Application No. WO 00/24339 to Berreklouw. Applicants respectfully traverse.

2. Anticipation Rejections.

As noted above, claims 13-15 and 22 stand rejected as allegedly being anticipated by Carson. “A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. . . . ‘The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the . . . claim.’” MPEP 2131 (citations omitted). The Office Action asserts that Carson discloses each and every element of the rejected claims. Applicants respectfully traverse.

a. Claim 13.

Claim 13 stands rejected as allegedly anticipated by Carson. Claim 13, as amended, describes “positioning a first saddle of a first coupler having a first channel within a first conduit, **so that a portion of the first coupler is positioned on an inside wall of the first conduit, and another portion of the first coupler is positioned on an outside wall of the first conduit,**” and “positioning a second saddle of a second coupler having a second channel within a

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<sup>2</sup> Claim 21 depends from allowable independent claim 20. Thus, Applicants submit that claim 21 also is in condition for allowance.

second conduit, **so that a portion of the second coupler is positioned on an inside wall of the second conduit, and another portion of the second coupler is positioned on an outside wall of the second conduit.**” (emphases added) Applicants submit that Carson fails to disclose at least this element of claim 13.

In contrast, Carson illustrates a first securing component 14 which is positioned against the interior surface of the target vessel wall W, and a separate second securing component 16 which is moved along the sleeve 42 until the second securing component 16 has been moved against the exterior surface of the target vessel wall W. See Carson, Paras. [0070] and [0071], and **Figs. 3A, 3C, and 5A**. Thus, Carson discloses that the first securing component is positioned on an inside wall of the first conduit, and the second securing component is positioned on an outside wall of the first conduit. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 13, as amended, is not anticipated by Carson, and Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the anticipation rejections of these claims.

b. Claims 14-15.

Each of claims 14 and 15 ultimately depends from amended, independent claim 13. As a result, these dependent claims incorporate each and every element of claim 13. Thus, if Carson fails to disclose all of the elements of amended claim 13, then Carson also must fail to disclose all of the elements of the corresponding dependent claims. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the anticipation rejections of claims 14 and 15.

3. Obviousness Rejections.

Claims 16-19 and 22 depend, either directly or indirectly, from allowable, independent claim 13. MPEP 2143.03 states that “[i]f an independent claim is non-obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103, then any claim depending therefrom is nonobvious.” Therefore,

Applicants submit that claims 16-19 and 22 are allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 13 is allowable. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the obviousness rejection of claims 16-19 and 22.

**Conclusion:**

Applicants maintain that the above-captioned patent application, as amended, is in condition for allowance, and such disposition is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that the prosecution of this application may be furthered by discussing the application, in person or by telephone, with Applicants' representative, Applicants would welcome the opportunity to do so.

Applicants submit herewith payment of \$60.00 for a one-month extension of time. Nevertheless, in the event of any variance between the fees determined by Applicants and the fees determined by the PTO, please charge or credit any such variance to the undersigned's

**Deposit Account No. 02-0375.**

Respectfully submitted,  
**BAKER BOTTS, L.L.P.**

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